

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L NICOSIA 494

EO 11652 GDS

TAGS: PINT CY

SUBJECT: MAKARIOS SAYS BISHOPS SCANDALIZE CYPRUS CHURCH,
IMPLIES HE WILL TAKE ACTION AGAINST THEM

REF: NICOSIA 490

SUMMARY: ARCHBISHOP ISSUES SCATHING STATEMENT DENYING
VALIDITY OF CYPRUS BISHOPS DECISION TO DEFROCK HIM.
STATES HE WILL TAKE ALL NECESSARY STEPS TO SAFEGUARD
CHURCH PRESTIGE AND ENSURE ITS BISHOPS ARE ACCEPTABLE
TO PEOPLE. GREEK AMB LAGACOS, BEFORE LEAVING FOR ATHENS
FOR CONSULTATIONS ON POLITICAL REPERCUSSIONS OF CHURCH
SCHISM, TELLS US HE FEELS MAKARIOS WILL REMOVE BISHOP
OF PAPHOS, SPURRING GRIVASITES TO RETALIATE.

1. FOLLOWING BISHOPS DECISION (REFTEL) " TO DEFROCK
THE ARCHBISHOP FROM CHURCH AND CLERICAL OFFICE AND RETURN
(HIM) TO THE LAY CLASS," GRANTING HIM 30 DAYS TO APPEAL,
MAKARIOS ISSUED FOLLOWING STATEMENT EVENING MARCH 8:
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QUOTE THE SO- CALLED ' DECISION TO DEFROCK ME', TAKEN BY THE THREE BISHOPS IN A ' CONVENTICLE' HELD AT LIMASSOL, IS VOID AB INITIO AND OF NO VALUE WHATSOEVER. I DO NOT, HOWEVER, CONCEAL MY DEEPEST REGRET THAT THE THREE BISHOPS, ACTING ON INSTIGATION AND IN UTTER DISREGARD OF THE DIFFICULT CIRCUMSTANCES NOW PREVAILING IN CYPRUS, HAVE SHOWN LACK OF EPISCOPAL CONSCIENCE AND NATIONAL RESPONSIBILITY AND HAVE UNSCRUPULOUSLY ATTEMPTED TODAY MY SPIRITUAL ASSASSINATION. I PRAY TO GOD THAT THEY MAY BE FORGIVEN ' FOR THEY KNOW NOT WHAT THEY DO'.

QUOTE THE DECISION OF THE THREE BISHOPS IS CAUSING THE CHURCH OF CYPURS GRIEVOUS HARM AND IS SCANDALIZING THE ECCLESIASTICAL FLOCK FOR WHICH, ON ACCOUNT OF THEIR INEFFICIENCY, THEY COULD NOT CARE LESS, AND WHICH THEY OUGHT NOT TO DESPISE AND HURT. THE ACT OF THE THREE BISHOPS, HAVING SHOWN UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOUR OF DARK MEDIAEVAL MENTALITY, AMOUNTS, AMONGST OTHER THINGS, TO AN UNNTER CONTEMPT OF THE PEOPLE AND FLOCK.

QUOTE FULLY CONSCIOUS OF MY RESPONSIBILITIES AS PRIMATE OF THE CHURCH OF CYPRUS AND OF MY OBLIGATIONS AS NATIONAL LEADER, I HAVE NO OTHER ALTERNATIVE THAN TO TAKE ALL NECESSARY STEPS IN THE CIRCUMSTANCES FOR THE PROTECTION OF THE CHURCH, THE BISHOPS AND SHEPHERDS OF WHICH MUST BE ACCEPTABLE AND RESPECTED BY THEIR FLOCK AND NOT OBJECTIONABLE AND UNDESIRABLE. UNQTE.

2. EVENING MARCH 8 ABBOTS OF ALL ISLAND' S MONASTERIES (WITH EXCEPTION TROODITISA, WHERE YENNADIOS HAS RECENTLY RESIDED) ISSUED STATEMENT CALLING BISHOPS DECISION TO DEFROCK MAKARIOS " ILLEGAL AND AGAINST CANON LAW, AND THEREFOR NULL AND VOID." THEY CALLED ON GREEK CYPRIOTS TO CONTINUE TO REFER TO MAKARIOS AS PRELATE AND ETHNARCH OF ORTHODOX CHURCH IN CYPRUS.

3. GREEK AMB LAGACOS IS FLYING TO ATHENS MARCH 9 TO BRIEF HIS GOVT ON CHURCH SCHISM AND ITS POSSIBLE POLITICAL REPERCUSSIONS. AT DINNER MARCH 8 HE TOLD ACTING DCM THAT HE VERY MUCH FEARED MAKARIOS INTENDED REMOVE BIHOP YENNADIOS FROM PAPHOS SEAT, AND THAT SUBSEQUENT ELECTION TO FILL
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VACANCY COULD AFFORD OCCASION FOR RETALIATORY ACTION BY

GRIVAS. HE CONCEDED, HOWEVER, THAT ANY SUCH MOVE BY GRIVAS WOULD LACK POPULAR SUPPORT AND WOULD ONLY BE UNDERTAKEN IF GRIVAS WERE LOOKING FOR PRETEXT. LAGACOS SAID HE HAD DONE HIS BEST TO DISSUADE BISHOPS FROM TAKING ACTION AGAINST ARCHBISHOP, BUT HAD FOUND THAT CYPRIOTS DEFERRED TO "NATIONAL CENTER" ONLY TO EXTENT IT SUITED THEM.

4. IN TALKS WITH FONMIN CHRISTOPHIDES AND OTHERS EVENING MARCH 9, AMBASSADOR FOUND PRINCIPAL REACTION TO BE DISPLEASURE AT UNSEEMLINESS OF CYPRUS CHURCH CLERICS PUBLICLY WASHING THEIR DIRTY LINEN. FEELING WAS THAT BISHOPS ACTIONS, APART FROM THEIR POLITICAL CONSEQUENCES, SERIOUSLY DAMAGED PRESTIGE OF CYPRUS CHURCH.
POPPER

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